FUJI FACTS

The Official Newsletter of the Atari Computer Enthusiasts of Columbus

Volume 6, Number 6 **June, 1988** **priceless!**

"All the news that fits, we'll print!"

The Editor's Column

by Warren Lieuallen

All in all, a remarkable month! For a change, I am not in my usual desperate need of articles and information (although, I hasten to add, I can still use all you can churn out!). It's also remarkable in that I've been busier than usual with "non-computer" things; I hope my lack of time doesn't show through in the newsletter. As you can see, I've been fiddling around again with the format of Fuji Facts, trying to get everything to fit on the page better. As we've discussed, this smaller print is less desirable, but much more economical (just to compare it, I printed this month's issue "normally" and it was sixteen pages long! So, at least until we get a new editor, it's here to stay.

Quite an information packed edition this month. I've started off with an article for all the "tech–rats" on the use of RAM bank selection, written by our own resident professional programmer, Tony Ramos. Anyone with a 130 XE, or any memory extension modifications should be interested in this important, information–packed article.

Next I've continued with our series of BASIC tutorials by Jackson Beebe. In this installment, you'll learn some very important commands, and actually begin writing BASIC programs! Are you up for some homework? I hope so, because several assignments will follow the article (if anyone needs assistance, please contact either me or Charles Brown, our BASIC expert).

Another member-submitted article follows. Michael Steve gives us a very useful review of several high-quality programs for children. Perhaps the best feature is that he has restricted his choices to those programs available through our own Disk Library. In a world were good educational software for children is sorely lacking, reviews like these are much needed.

The ACEC BBS contains in its DataBase sections a wealth of information—part of that information is a series of SpartaDOS tutorials. In light of all the interest expressed by many of our members about SpartaDOS, I thought that running these tutorials would be useful. First, a two part series which serves as an excellent introduction, as it compares SpartaDOS with the more familiar Atari DOS 2.5. Then, in the following months, a more in-depth and advanced series (if I can log on and capture all of them!).

I have also included a file from CompuServe, just in case any of you might have missed it. Along with the new forum software, the Atari SysOps are sponsoring a contest which could win you major dollars! If you can draw at all, don't miss out. Also from CompuServe is a review of one of the newest terminal programs available from the eight-bit Ataris: DeTerm. From what I've heard, this is a complete and full-featured terminal program to rival the very popular Express! series. It also features a very unique "extra" (but I won't give it away—read the review!).

To compliment Don Bowlin's demonstration of PrintPower at the meeting, I've added a reprint which reviews this program. I've read a number of reviews of Hi-Tech Expression's software (all of them good), and would urge you to support them by giving their line of programs a good look.

Don has also prepared a set of minutes for both the main May meeting, as well as the officers' meeting held later that month. You'll find his discussion on the back page.

Table of Contents:

Banking Made Easy, or Should You Deposit Instead of POKE to Access Banked Memory?

by Anthony Ramos

You 130XE and RAMBO XL owners know how great those 16K memory banks are for a RAM disk. They're also very handy when it's time to use Atariwriter Plus, and other software that uses them to your advantage. But what about when you want to roll up your sleeves and use them yourself? You can't just POKE around as though it's a continuous chunk of memory. The common seven byte "hhh*LVd" machine language reading string won't do the job either. But here's some information you can really bank on, condensed from Mapping the Atari.

When a bank is opened, it appears through an "access window" in the main memory, at locations 16384-32767. If you enable bank switching, you cause the normal RAM in this area to be replaced by the bank you've chosen. You can configure the system to one of four modes: both processors using main memory, CPU (6502 main processor) using banked RAM, video (ANTIC) using banked RAM, or both using banked memory. In all cases, the only memory affected is the area 16384-32767.

In CPU extended RAM mode, only the CPU accesses the extra memory. All ANTIC cycles operate in the main 64K memory. This means you can use the extended memory for programs and data, while using the main bank for display lists and screen data.

In the video extended RAM mode, all ANTIC references to the area 16384-32767 will be directed to the secondary bank; all CPU references will occur in the main bank. This allows you to access the entire RAM memory for programs and data in the main area, while locating display lists and screen data in the secondary bank.

In the general extended RAM mode, both the CPU and ANTIC process in the bank switched memory, and the main area in 16384-32767 is not used at all.

Location 54017 controls which bank is accessed, and by which processors. Default at powerup is both chips using main memory, or compatibility mode. To access the banks, POKE 54017 with 193+ (Mode*16)+ (Bank*4), with the modes and banks as follows:

Mode 0: both chips access banked memory

Mode 1: CPU accesses main memory, ANTIC accesses banked memory

Mode 2: CPU accesses banked memory, ANTIC accesses main memory

Mode 3: both chips access main memory (Compatibility mode)

Bank 0: first bank; Bank 1: second bank; Bank 2: third bank; and Bank 3: fourth bank

An example: If you plan to use the banked memory for a character set, you must first load it in using the 6502 main processor. Poke 54017 with 193+16*2+0 to access bank one. Then use the familiar POKEs to 852-853 and 856-857 and "hhh*LVd" load the set into the area 16384-32767. Now POKE 54017 with 193+1*16 to make ANTIC access the banked area while the 6502 uses main memory as usual, and POKE 756, address /256 of your set. Make sure that any statement which affects location 54017 is not in the area 16384-32767, or the computer will crash. You can check the memory location of a BASIC statement with the line PRINT ADR(" "). The book "Mapping the Atari" goes into more detail.

If you don't want to get this involved, I've included at the end of this article some machine language strings which give you the same power over the banks that you are accustomed to with the "straight" memory. Remember, though, that these commands will alter or completely erase the RAM disk if present.

When you power up the computer, the banks are not clear, but full of garbage data. BCLEAR fills all four banks with zeros for a fresh start. BPOKE and BPEEK work like POKE and PEEK, except you access the banks like a continuous block of memory locations from 0-65535. These routines take care of the bank-switching location 54017, but they must not reside in the area 16384-32767. Put the lines at the top of your program and you will have no problem; type PRINT BPOKE, BPEEK, BCLEAR if you want to make sure. They can even be compiled, with one catch: under the TURBO BASIC compiler, the screen jitters when the banks are accessed.

From a technical standpoint, the 130XE has only twice the addressable memory of the older 800XL. But as a programmer, you actually have over three times more usable RAM. An Atari BASIC program which manipulates the extra 64K creates quite a powerful computing package. And you can take that to the bank!

```
5 REM X=USR(BCLEAR) *Clear All Banks*     Note: All inverse characters preceded by [INV], all control characters by [CTRL]
10 BCLEAR=ADR("h[INV])[INV]a[INV][CTRL M][INS CHAR][CTRL F][INV][CTRL M][CTRL A][INV]S[INV]@[INV][CTRL E]
[INV]M[INV][CTRL E][INV]O[INV])[CTRL ,][INV][CTRL E][INV]L[INV][CTRL E][INV]N[INV][CTRL ,][INV])[CTRL ,][INV][CTRL
Q][INV]L[INV]%[INV]L[CTRL X]i[CTRL A][INV][CTRL E][INV]L[INV]%[INV]Mi[CTRL ,][INV][CTRL
E][INV]M[INV]%[INV]N8[INV]i[CTRL A][INV][CTRL E][INV]N[INV]%[INV]O[INV]i[CTRL ,][INV][CTRL E][INV]O[INV]%[INV]N
[INV]P[INV]^[INV]%[INV]O[INV]P[INV]Z[INV]-[INS CHR][CTRL F][CTRL X]i[CTRL D][INV][CTRL M][INS CHR][CTRL F][INV]
[CTRL M][CTRL A][INV]S[INV]I[INV]q[INV]P[INV]9[CTRL .]")
15 REM X=USR(BPEEK,address 0-65535)
20 BPEEK=ADR("hh[INV][CTRL E][INV]Oh[INV][CTRL E][INV]N[INV]%[INV]O)[INV]@jjjj[CTRL I][INV]a[INV][CTRL M][CTRL
A][INV]S[INV]%[INV]O)?[CTRL I]@[INV][CTRL E][INV]O[INV][CTRL ,][INV]1[INV]N[INV]*[INV])[INV]q[INV][CTRL M][CTRL A]
[INV]S[INV][CTRL D][INV]U[INV][CTRL F][INV]T[CTRL .]")
25 REM X=USR(BPOKE,address 0-65535,1 byte value 0-255)
30 BPOKE=USR("hh[INV][CTRL E][INV]Oh[INV][CTRL E][INV]Nhh[INV][CTRL E][INV]P[INV]%[INV]O)[INV]@JJJJ[CTRL I][INV]a
[INV][CTRL M][CTRL A][INV]S[INV]%[INV]O)?[CTRL I]@[INV][CTRL E][INV]O[INV] [CTRL ,][INV]%[INV]P[INV][CTRL Q][INV]N
[INV])[INV]q[INV][CTRL M][CTRL A][INV]S[CTRL .]")
```

Learning To Program In Atari BASIC #3

reprinted from ZMag via the ACEC BBS

Getting Started in Atari BASIC © 1986 by Jackson Beebe

9. TO RUN A PROGRAM:

When you have a program typed in correctly, LIST it, and make sure it's right. Type RUN (no line number) and RETURN. Your program should begin executing, and produce output. It's STILL in memory, and you can LIST it, or RUN it again. You can usually stop a program with the BREAK key.

The RUN command is used in IMMEDIATE Mode (no line number). When we use line numbers, we're in PROGRAMMING Mode. When we type commands in IMMEDIATE mode, we're talking directly to the computer. You can print in immediate mode. Try:

PRINT "ZOWIE"

It prints, but it's also gone, and not in memory. Try a LIST, and you'll notice it's not there.

10. SAVING A PROGRAM:

DISK DRIVE:

To save a program to disk, you think up an eight letter filename. It has to start with a letter, and can only be eight characters (letters and numbers). No spaces are allowed. If you wish, you can type a period, and add a three letter extension to label programs. It's usually used that way. For example GAME .BAS would be a game in BASIC. To save a program, type SAVE "D:FILENAME" and hit RETURN (the D refers to disk drive; if you use only D, it assumes D1 or drive #1. Use the proper number if you have multiple drives.) Your disk should spin, and save the program under the name you gave it. Think up good names, because when you have hundreds of programs, you need to be able to identify them from their name alone.

At this point the program is STILL in memory, AND a copy stored on the disk. You could remove the disk, and shut down the system, and your program will remain on the disk.

CASSETTE:

To SAVE a program to cassette, rewind the tape to the beginning, or the place you want to record at. Type CSAVE and RETURN in Immediate mode. You will hear two beeps, to remind you to push two keys. Push down both the PLAY and RECORD buttons at the same time on the recorder. Now push RETURN again, to start the recording. When your program has been saved to tape, the tape will stop turning. Note the counter number for future reference. No filenames are possible with tapes.

11. DIRECTORY:

To see a list of the files on your disk, you must go to DOS (Disk Operating System.) This is done by typing: DOS.

This is in immediate mode. When you get to the DOS menu, follow your DOS's instructions to look at your files. When finished, return to your BASIC cartridge, usually menu option B. If you are using a MEM.SAV file, your BASIC program will remain unchanged in memory. Without, when you return from DOS, your BASIC program will be gone into never never land, and lost. This is no problem if you remember to SAVE it before going to DOS. You can load it back in. You'll learn quickly after losing a few programs that you hadn't saved yet. Read your disk manual about this.

12. LOADING A PROGRAM:

DISK DRIVE:

To get that program back the next time you use your computer, install BASIC and turn on the disk drive. Insert the disk and then turn on the computer. The disk should spin and give you READY prompt. You're in BASIC. To get back your old program, type:

LOAD "D:FILENAME"

Your disk should spin, load in the program, and say "READY". To see it, type L. or LIST. To run it, type RUN. To stop it, usually the BREAK key will do it. You can start again with RUN, or sometimes by typing CONT for continue.

If you change your program with line editing, or by adding to it, be sure to save a copy with the changes. I save my program often while writing, in case I screw it up totally, or there's a (GASP) power failure. Programs saved on disk survive.

CASSETTE:

To load from cassette, wind/rewind the tape to the beginning of program using counter. Type CLOAD and RETURN. You will hear one beep. Push down the PLAY key on the recorder. Now hit RETURN once again. The tape should beginning turning, and load in the program. Be patient, tape is a very slow process. You will hear bleeps as the tape loads in. Sooner or later, the tape will finish loading. Type LIST or RUN.

SAMPLE Problems:

PROBLEM 0 (can be filenamed PROB0)

Okay here we put it all together. Type in the following program EXACTLY as it appears below.

```
10 REM *** PROB0 ***
20 REM Your Name - Date
30 REM
40 PRINT CHR$(125)
50 PRINT "HELLO WORLD"
60 PRINT:PRINT:PRINT
70 PRINT "I am communicating with the world."
80 PRINT
90 PRINT "      by Your Name"
100 END
```

We introduced one new concept here. The PRINT CHR$ (125). It "prints" the screen clear (clears the screen.) Handy statement to put up front in a program. Starts you off with a fresh screen.

Type the program in. Save it to disk with SAVE "D1:PROB0". When it's done and a copy saved on the disk, run it by typing RUN. You should see output as follows:

HELLO WORLD
I am communicating with the world.
by Your Name

Try turning your computer off, rebooting, and loading this program back in. LIST it to see if it's there. Try running it again. If it works, then congratulate yourself. You have written a BASIC program.

PROBLEM 1

Write a program to produce the following output:

```
************
*          *
*    *     *
*   * *    *
*  *   *   *
*  *     *  *
*  *******  *
*  *     *  *
*  *     *  *
*  *     *  *
*          *
************
```

PROBLEM 1A

Write a program to print:

```
 AA  TTTTT   AA    RRR    I
A  A   T    A  A   R  R   I
A  A   T    A  A   R  R   I
AAAA   T    AAAA   RRR    I
A  A   T    A  A   R  R   I
A  A   T    A  A   R  R   I
```

This concludes Part 3 of Lesson 1 of Learning to program in Atari BASIC. Be sure to read next month for Part 4 and the start of Lesson 2, which covers:

LET statement, Numeric variables, String variables, READ statement, DATA statement, Math rules, END statement, INPUT statement

We'll begin problem solving at the end of Lesson 2.

Contact me at:
Jackson Beebe
Prairie Data Fields
807 W. Hill Street
Urbana, IL 61801
or CompuServe 72550,317

Favorite PD Software – Pixie Picks

by Michael Steve

I have been a member of A.C.E.C. for just over a year now, and have faithfully stood in line for most of the D.O.M.s offered over that time period. When I get home from the meeting, I usually try to sneak downstairs to check out my new D.O.M. This is not so much because I enjoy tooling through programs so much, but rather to avoid that dreaded question from the children: "Did you get us any programs, Daddy?" I promise them that if I find one, I will add it to their personal disk library. Then I send them off to bed and perform my magic disappearing act.

A few times I have been very happy to find a game or instructional program that the young computer enthusiast can handle. I have to admire the people who have the talent to write such programs, and the good will to enter their work into the public domain. In my opinion they deserve some recognition.

Adrian's Pick – ABC.BAS

Adrian turned 3 years old in December. He insists on his turn at the computer, and it is really hard to turn him down when he asks for the ABC game. "Picture These ABC's" was written by Bruce N. Willard in 1984.

When this program loads, a menu with all the letters of the alphabet is shown, with a prompt to pick a letter. Each letter of the alphabet has a picture that fills the screen when that letter is pressed on the keyboard. For example, the letter G is represented by a row of flowers that grow on the screen. The word garden appears at the top, and the first letter is highlighted. To return to the menu, the correct initial letter must be pressed.

To keep the child from becoming bored once all the pictures become familiar, the author has cleverly arranged to have the colors change. I became aware of this effect the third time my son hit the letter T and announced in surprise that the truck was green now. Nice job, Bruce, wherever you are.

Renata's Pick – MUSFLASH.BAS

This program is a tutorial on the notes of the treble and bass clef. It was written by James W. Brown and appeared in ANTIC, February 1985 (page 66). It is a very friendly approach to learning to read music.

The student decides whether to work in one or both clefs at the same time, and how many notes to be tested on. Then a whole note is plotted on the staff and a countdown begins. When the correct letter is keyed, the note sounds. A false note gets the raspberries.

At the end of the test, a score is displayed, and if you didn't do very well, you are admonished that you aren't concentrating. Thanks, Jim; just what my 9-year old needs as she is beginning piano.

Dad's Pick – HELPER.BAS

This program is called "Homework Helper", written by Jim Chapman (7/2/85) of the Seattle-Puget Sound ACE. This program lets the teacher type set up a test with multiple choice or true-false format. First a question is typed in, then the choices for the student to respond to. The teacher tags the correct answer so that the computer can keep track of the student's score. The question file can be saved to disk for later loading or editing, and it can be run on the screen for interactive testing or directed to a printer for hard copy.

I really enjoy the challenge of creating plausible answers to the test questions, and Renata loves sharing the test printout with class mates. Jim must be pretty modest, because he hid the reference to authorship in line 4900. But I found him anyway, and my hat's off to him.

An Introduction To SpartaDOS

A BEGINNERS GUIDE pt.I

by Ed Bachman

Well, I think that a topic like SpartaDOS deserves an introduction of sorts. For the record I feel that SpartaDOS, although initially a difficult DOS to learn, is a utility that you can grow into, not out of. SpartaDOS truly has a lot of potential for getting the most out of your 8-bit Atari.

I'm going to start this series by comparing the SpartaDOS functions to the Atari DOS functions via illustrations in both. Note: I'm going to try to be as explicit as possible with the SpartaDOS commands, however the DOS 2.5 examples will only be very general as this is a Sparta tutorial.

When you boot your Atari DOS you see the following neat stuff:

```
A DISK DIRECTORY    I FORMAT DISK
B RUN CARTRIDGE     J DUPLICATE DISK
C COPY FILE         K BINARY SAVE
D DELETE FILE(S)    L BINARY LOAD
E RENAME FILE       M RUN AT ADDRESS
F LOCK FILE         N CREATE MEM.SAV
G UNLOCK FILE       O DUPLICATE FILE
H WRITE DOS FILES   P FORMAT SINGLE
SELECT ITEM OR RETURN FOR MENU
```

Very nicely designed to get you going right away. You're prompted to enter a letter which precedes the function you wish to call. Then it takes you through a little question and answer session, and the finally you get to type in something like: D1:MYFILE.BAS, D2:MYFILE.BAS

This is fine until you start to become proficient at using DOS. Then all those questions start to become BORING! The menu just seems to stand in your way when doing your disk housekeeping chores. Even reading a directory is becoming a pain. Well, you've had enough so you go out and get SpartaDOS, you boot it up and you see:

D1:

Pretty cryptic, eh? Not really. All of the Atari DOS functions are there (or similar functions). SpartaDOS does have a menu, but then again so does DOS 3, and the real power of SpartaDOS is in the command processor, so I'm purposely going to avoid the menu for these tutorials. Let's run down the Atari DOS menu an item at a time.

A—DISK DIRECTORY

Atari DOS = We all know how to get a disk directory.

SpartaDOS equiv. = DIR

DIR shows the disk directory for drive #1. If you have more than one disk drive (or a RAMdisk) you can first type, "D2:" or whatever the other drive's number is. You'll notice that the prompt will change to D2: (this is called a default configuration and any time you do not specify the drive # you'll be accessing whatever drive the prompt on your screen indicates). Then type "DIR" and you get a directory of that drive. If you want to get back to D1 just enter "D1:" and you'll be back on the #1 disk. One more note for you Atari DOS fans, if you enter DIRS instead of DIR you'll get an Atari type directory listing with sector size and not bytes and time, etc.

B—RUN CARTRIDGE

Atari DOS = self explanatory, right?

SpartaDOS equiv. = CAR

You enter the CAR command to exit to BASIC (or whatever cartridge you are using.

C—COPY FILE

Atari DOS = there are a number of ways that this is used under DOS 2.5: to copy files from drive to drive, or to move them on the same disk (but not under the same name), even copy from a file to the editor or vice versa. The most common forms of the copy command would be:

COPY D1:MYFILE .BAS, D2:MYFILE.BAS or
D1:MYFILE.BAS ,D1:MYPROG.BKP or
D1:MYFILE.LST, P: or
D1:MYFILE .TXT,E: and two more variations
E:,DOSTEXT.TXT and D1:SUBRT1.LST,
D1:MAINPRG.LST/A

The first example is simple file copying between two drives. The second, a file copy on the same disk (notice the name change). The third is a printer dump. The fourth, an example of displaying a text file to the screen by copying it to the editor. The fifth is an example of creating a text file by copying directly from the editor to a DOS file. I personally don't recommend this procedure as text editing capabilities are limited and there is a risk of loosing a file, and possibly an entire disk. The sixth example is an append operation where the contents of the file SUBRT1 are copied onto the end of the file MAINPRG. Now, the thing all these examples have in common is that they all use a comma as a delimiter or place marker to show the separation between filespecs ie. "copy/from,to".

SpartaDOS equiv.= COPY i.e. COPY D1:MYFILE.BAS D2:MYFILE.BAS

The SpartaDOS copy command is similar in uses and even syntax to Atari DOS, however there are a few dif-

ferences. Firstly, SpartaDOS assumes that you already know that COPY is a memory destructive command, that if COPY is used, any program in BASIC at that time will be erased.

Secondly, SpartaDOS does not use the comma as a delimiter, instead it uses a space. SpartaDOS in its current form considers a comma as part of a filename, the use of a comma instead of a space could cause errors in the source or destination file, or an aborted command.

Thirdly, you have to type the COPY command (not just C with a little Q&A session). Otherwise SpartaDOS has the same applications and guidelines for using COPY as does Atari DOS i.e., drive to drive file copy, same disk file duplicate (if destination file of a different name), copy [to/from] device, like the editor/printer/etc., or copy/append. These are the most basic forms of the Copy command. For other methods, read the SpartaDOS Construction Set manual. One further note, since SpartaDOS supports subdirectories, you may use the COPY command without renaming the file, provided the file is copied to a different directory then that of the source file! Here's an example: D1:COPY D1:TEXT.FIL D1:SUBDIRTEXT.FIL (SUBDIR being the name of the directory in which we are writing TEXT.FIL). An excellent example of subdirectories and their use, along with other powerful examples of SpartaDOS can be found in the SpartaDOS Tutorials by Mike Stoliker. So I'm not going to get too involved with the more advanced features of SpartaDOS when there's such good information already available.

D—DELETE FILE

Atari DOS = This one's pretty self explanatory too.

SpartaDOS equiv. = ERASE

Note that SpartaDOS assumes that you are sure that you want to erase the file and just goes ahead and erases it! However, it won't erase if the disk or file is write locked.

E —RENAME FILE

Atari DOS = This is another example of the similarities between SpartaDOS and Atari DOS. The Atari command would look like this: "E" MYFILE.BAS,YOURFILE.BAS

SpartaDOS equiv. = RENAME i.e. RENAME MYFILE.BAS YOURFILE.BAS

See how the SpartaDOS command is similar to the Atari command. You just have to type in the command, and you must remember to use a space instead of a comma. Once again SpartaDOS will not rename the file if the diskette or the file is write protected.

F—LOCK FILE

Atari DOS = Once again, we know how to lock and unlock Atari files, by locking each file individually or in groups by using wildcards.

However, we were bound to get into this sooner or later, SpartaDOS supports two different lock commands. The command LOCK in SpartaDOS is not the same as Atari DOS. LOCK in SpartaDOS is like putting a write-protect tab on the disk, as it "locks" the entire disk. The command we are looking for is PROTECT. Otherwise, it works the same as the Atari DOS LOCK command (by file or groups with wildcards).

G—UNLOCK FILE

Atari DOS = Remember what was said about lock and unlock in SpartaDOS.

SpartaDOS equiv. = UNPROTECT. Same rules apply as above.

H—WRITE DOS FILES

Atari DOS = There is no write DOS files in SpartaDOS (it is instead found as a prompt in the SpartaDOS formatter XINIT.COM).

SpartaDOS equiv. = None. Instead, you must COPY the version of SpartaDOS to a disk and then use Sparta's BOOT command (BOOT X32D.DOS, etc.). This command will write to the boot sector of the disk and allow you to boot any of the versions of Sparta (or any other program, for that matter). This is why you are allowed to have more than one version of DOS on the disk with the extender DOS.

I—FORMAT DISK

Atari DOS = In DOS 2.5, this command is for the 1050's density and half.

SpartaDOS equiv. = XINIT

The SpartaDOS version of the format command is not an internal command. That means it's not part of the DOS package loaded into memory. So if you plan to format a disk, you must have the file XINIT.COM on the disk along with SpartaDOS of course. Even though this is a separate file, note from the example that you just have to type in the command and XINIT will run. XINIT will format in three densities, single, 1050 dual density and true double density. It will also ask if you want DOS written to the disk or not.

XINIT will also configure for a variety of disk/disk drive configurations (the Atari 1050 is selection #1 [40tpi SSDD]). XINIT is a multiple disk formatter, so when it's done with a disk it returns to just after the start of the utility. To exit the utility, press Escape.

Well, that's it for this segment. I'd also like to take the time to thank Mike Stoliker for his help and support, I consider him a definitive source of SpartaDOS and Atari DOS information.

CompuServe© Contest Information

*from CompuServe's SIG*Atari*

By now, those of you that subscribe to CompuServe should have received the May edition of CompuServe's Online Today magazine. This issue highlighted the major redesign of the Forum Software that came to all Forums in the middle of May. The cover of this issue featured one artist's representation of what the Forum product might "look like" if it were a building or house. The three major areas of the Forum (the Message Board, the Libraries, and the Conference Rooms) are represented as simple "rooms" in the house with minimal decorations or furnishings.

In truth, the Forum software contains many other components which could be shown as additional pieces of the forum floorplan. For instance, if the house was drawn in more detail, perhaps the entry foyer would include the Short Bulletin/News Flash which members see upon entry to the Forum. Besides the Message Board, Conference area, and Libraries, the Forum Software also offers a list of Bulletins/Announcements which might be represented as another room. We have a Membership Interest Directory where members can list their interests or search out others who share their interests. We have a User Options area where you can customize different settings for your own needs. There has even been an on-going debate amongst old time Forum members as to the "perceived direction" or spatial relationships between the various areas of the Forum (e.g., "Do you go UP or DOWN to the Conference rooms?", etc.).

The Sysops of the Atari Forums would like to see YOUR idea of what our Forums look like, as drawn on your Atari computer. Our contest will have two divisions: One for pictures drawn on an Atari 8-bit computer and one for the best pictures drawn with an Atari ST computer. There will be grand prizes of two months free usage in the Atari Forum of your choice in each division and numerous "good job" prizes as well. In fact, the Sysops reserve the right to increase the value of the grand prize depending on the number of entries received. We also reserve the right to issue prizes to EVERY valid entry!

What does the Forum software look like to you? Please draw and upload your interpretation of what the Forum looks like! This contest may not have any losers so be sure to get your entries in by July 1, 1988.

Shareware Review: DeTerm 850

by John M. Urbansky III

When Keith Ledbetter released the Express! series of public domain terminal programs for the Atari 8-bit computers, many said they were the best terminal programs available for any computer. Users of the Express! programs loved all the many fine features of them – the scrolling menu, the ASCII/ AtASCII/Vidtex support, the automatic dialing, etc. The general ease-of-use of the whole series impressed and inspired a lot of people.

Now there is a program in the public domain entitled DeTerm 850, and it is every bit as good as Express! – plus it's packed full of things that Express! doesn't offer, such as the windowing system much like that used on the Atari ST computers, the LD and city codes and identification, and the included mini version of Breakout that you can play while uploading, downloading or waiting for a connection at the same time! Whether this can be called true multitasking or not is beyond the scope of this review – I'll let the experts figure that one out – but it is equally impressive!

But first let's look at some of the many fine aspects of DeTerm. In its recently released final version, DeTerm is now available for the Atari 1030, XM301 and SX-212 modems, as well as any Hayes-compatible using a suitable interface (Atari 850, ICD P:R:Connection).

Setup

DeTerm is very intelligent. After booting up your DOS and loading the correct RS232 handler (I had to use the SpartaDOS RS232.COM handler, since the handler included with DeTerm didn't seem to work with my P:R:Connection), load it in using whatever DOS you use. DeTerm works fine with Atari DOS 2.5 as well as SpartaDOS Version 3.2, which is the recommended DOS for this program. While loading, the upper part of the screen shows the title, the name of the author (James Dillow) and the copyright notice. DeTerm is copyrighted, but is a Share-Ware program, like Express! That is, the program is free and in the public domain, but user-modified versions are not to be given away or sold without permission. You can make a donation if you like – whatever the program is worth to you.

After the program has loaded, it will search for the files LIST.BAT and MODEM.BAT. These are batch files that will load your phone list from disk or send commands to your modem. If DeTerm cannot find them it will let you know, but still function correctly (these files are not required, they just make things easier for you). After that, the screen will be blank except for the top line, which will display several options you can select by moving the cursor keys. When your option is highlighted, press [RETURN] and a window will appear below that option, with several choices of it's own. Again, move the cursor keys to the option you want and press [RETURN]. There are many options De-Term can handle, and all are easily selectable by this method. I believe it is far simpler than memorizing cryptic command codes or having to refer to a manual.

Features

De-Term offers uploading and downloading using XModem protocol, as well as text capture. It doesn't support YModem yet, but future versions might include this. The version number for the De-Term that is presently in the public domain is 1.00b -- the lowercase "b" meaning this is an experimental ("beta-test") version. It also lets you force terminal mode with your modem, as in Express!, so that you can enter commands directly to your Hayes-Compatible.

Some of the other features are less essential but show a thoughtful touch. The View option creates a text frame on the screen and lets you view a text file one page at a time (one page being about 18 lines or so). When you are finished reading the page, hit any key and the screen will scroll up another page and wait for you to hit another key. I found this very handy, and frequently boot De-Term just to read text files!

Then there's the included mini-Breakout game – something I've never seen in any terminal program for the 8-bit Atari's before (not to mention other brands of computers). After dialing a number, you can press Control-G for the Breakout game (Control-F to resume a previous game) and play it until the modem connects with the other computer, information service, etc., and then the screen will go to terminal mode and let you communicate. Now let's say there's a file you'd like, but it's pretty large and would take more than a few minutes to download. Simply start the transfer, then press either Control-F or Control-G again, and you can play Breakout while the transfer is taking place (If you don't believe me, try it and look at your modem's RD and SD indicators. They will be flashing, indicating data transfer!). When the transfer is complete, De-Term returns you to terminal mode, and you can resume communicating. This also works during uploads.

Overview

All in all, I like De-Term very much, and use it regularly instead of Express! I still use Express!, especially if I'm communicating with someone who is rather impatient (De-Term's transfer protocol is a little slower checking blocks than Express!'s) but I'm not often in that situation. I like the windowing system more than the Express!'s scrolling menu, and the screen buffer and city codes are nice, but let's face it – I love the game! No longer do I have to stare at a screen full of cryptic control characters while uploading or downloading.

POWER TO THE PRINTER

PRINT POWER for 8-Bit Computers

Reviewed by The Mad Reviewer

(Reprinted from the Portland Atari Club newsletter, March 1988)

I have written to you regarding good software at a fair price in previous newsletters, well here is MY KIND OF PROGRAM. The name of the program is PRINT POWER from Hi-Tech Expressions and the price is $15. THIS PROGRAM REQUIRES A 1050 OR ENHANCED DENSITY DISK DRIVE.

Here is everything you wished for from PRINTSHOP by Borderbund and more. You can use any of 6 (yes, I said six) fonts in 3 different sizes with 7 special effects. That's 126 combinations anywhere on the page! You can select a border on any side or combination there of. You can print out 3 types of cards, tall, wide, or tent. You can print your posters up and down or across. You can print on each face of the cards selectively. You can put any of 5 sizes of graphics (icons) on any place on the card/poster you wish. You can create banners with 11 sizes of printing and 7 special effects as well as icons and more than one line of text on the banner. You can create letterhead etc. Did I say that the 126 fonts are available on any of the above? Did I say you could place as many icons as you want on the page, as long as they don't overlap?

This program can also use the AWARDWARE graphics disk. The publishers have told me that there is a PRINTPOWER PAK disk coming out with a graphics generator and many other goodies. Sorry, but PRINTSHOP icons won't work. By the w the PRINTPOWER icons are much more detailed than t PRINTSHOP icons, as are the borders.

On the negative side PRINTPOWER takes longer to think about how it is going to print, but it doesn't blank the screen or put up a color changing graphic. You can see all kinds of letters and numbers and ATARI graphics characters moving over a basic blue screen while the program is thinking. However, the program has much more to think about than PRINTSHOP.

The program also configures to use as much memory as you have in the machine. This eliminates much disk swapping for machines with memory upgrades - it supports both NEWELL & RAMBO. You can also copy the files to double density or to a hard disk or a ramdisk.

Now for the rest of the goodies. When you send in your registration card there is also in the box an order form that will get you the AWARDWARE graphics disk for $2. The program has a file that will allow you convert this disk so that it can be used with AWARDWARE or PRINTPOWER. The documentation is well written and is easy to use, but I still wish it could have been printed on standard page size so that it could be put in a binder - maybe even including holes (hint, hint). I also found a extra font on my disk called Christmas, maybe this is a Late Christmas present. When I talked with the people at Hi-Tech Expressions, they were friendly and most helpful. This is one of those programs that really give you your moneys worth and more so. I highly recommend it to you. By the way, these programs are moving like the Redskins at the superbowl, so you may have to wait for a copy. But I am told that there should be enough to go around and, if not, the dealers will make sure that there are

By the way the disks, are not copy protected. But for cost, why bother pirating a copy and going through all the trouble figuring out what does which? Just buy the bloody program. Support those who are supporting you!

Meeting Minutes for the Month of May, 1988

by Don Bowlin

The May club meeting was an opportunity for club members to show off their home-grown software. Jim Murphy demonstrated a program that he has written which keeps track of golf scores. This was one of Jim's first programs and was written in BASIC for the 8-bit. Jim has subsequently moved to writing commercial software for the ST. Perhaps at a future meeting we could prevail on him to review some of his ST programs. Warren Lieuallen reviewed several of his programs including an outstanding version of his BATTLESHIP game. Warren has written numerous other programs and at various times has tried his hand at writing everything from 80 column word processors to his own personal version of SYNFILE.

In addition to the home-grown software there was a review of a new DOS from Australia (No, its not crocodile DOS!). This DOS has almost the same menu as DOS 2.0 and DOS 2.5, but is much more powerful. The new DOS is called Super DOS. It is compatible with Atari DOS, but it has additional commands; it is easier to use than SpartaDOS, but is not as powerful. Super DOS will automatically set up the largest RAMdisk that your computer will take, based on its available memory. Another nice feature is that after doing a directory listing from DOS it does not wipe out the files you have just listed when you select the copy command. Super DOS was reviewed in ANTIC last month. This program is available through the club at a discount price of $15.00. Contact Don Bowlin for additional information or to place an order.

Other meeting activities included the raffling off of the club's old Centurian Disk drive, which had not been used much of late. The Clubs Sysop, Frank Seipel, passed out a current listing of all the downloads that are on the ACEC BBS.

At the officers meeting it was decided to review at the June club meeting a new Print Shop type of program from a company named HI-TECH Expressions. This company is currently one of the more prolific software sources for the 8-bit Atari, and they deserve your support. Their latest offering is actually two similar programs, both of which are similar to Print Shop but much more powerful. The first of these is PRINTPOWER. PRINTPOWER lets you make all of the posters, banners, and cards that Print Shop allows but is more powerful. PRINTPOWER allows you to have several fonts on a single document. It also allows more than one line on a banner and it allows you to put borders on your banners. The output from this program is much more professional looking than what you get from Print Shop. It sells for $10.95 at Software Plus. The only disadvantages that I could find are that it is a little harder to use and it doesn't have the huge selection of icons that Print Shop has. The other version of this program is the same except that it has only Sesame Street icons and is named the PRINT KIT. If possible we will also talk about some other programs from HI TECH EXPRESSIONS such as AWARDWARE. At the June meeting we will raffle off PRINTPOWER.

Board meetings lately have been relatively calm, particularly since the issue of our missing ST has been resolved. Regarding the clubs ST, I think we all owe thanks to Dave Feeney and Jim Murphy for their efforts in getting our equipment back from the ST club. Dave took the first initiative in going downtown and getting the necessary forms and information on how to pursue our claim in court. Jim then stepped in and offered to contact the ST group in an attempt to recover our ST without going to court. Jim's power of persuasion must be powerful, as he succeeded where the rest of us had failed.

Over the last few months there have been numerous discussions about the possibility of having one or two more board members from the ACEC membership. These would be AT LARGE positions that would not have any specific duties but would be available for special projects such as reactivating the SIG groups, communicating with other user groups, or planning publicity campaigns and new member drives. These positions would have full voting rights but would serve for only one year, after which the individuals would have to give up their position to a new person. The out going AT LARGE board member would then have to run for a "regular" position on the board if they still wanted to participate in board activities. The advantage of this type of rotating board position is that it would give club members who are interested in being more active an opportunity to become familiar with the administration of the club. At the same time it would give them the opportunity to become better known by the rest of the members. This system would also provide the "new blood" that the board doesn't seem to always get routinely.

The Atari Computer Enthusiasts of Columbus

ACEC is a non-profit organization interested in exchanging information about the Atari Home Computer Systems, and is not directly affiliated with Atari Corporation.

Membership in ACEC is open to all for a $12.00 yearly fee. Newsletters are available at our monthly meetings at DeSales High School, and are mailed to members three times a year.

Warren G. Lieuallen
1652 Hess Boulevard
Columbus, OH 43212

To:

Check your expiration date!